THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise

(e) No, Sir. Does not arise.

Safety of rail passengers

†380. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that incidents of looting of rail passengers after they are made to consume food laced with poison are on rampant increase.

(b) if so, whether Government would take any effective steps to make rail journey safer and also to protect life and property of rail-passengers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. There is an increase in the incidents of Drugging cases reported in trains during the period January to September 2006 in comparison to the corresponding period of the previous year.

(b) and (c) According to Entry No. 2 of the State List of the Constitution of India, 'Police' (including Railways and village Police), is a State subject. Registration of cases, their investigation and maintenance of law and order in Railway premises as well as on running trains are, therefore, the statutory responsibility of the State Police. The State Police have a separate wing called the Government Railway Police (GRP) for dealing with all matters relating to law and order on the Railways. So, Railways have to depend largely on state police (GRP) for control of crime on Railways. Regular co-ordination meetings are being held by RPF and Railway officials with their counterparts in GRP and Police of concerned states to highlight this problem and find out effective strategy to tackle the menace.

To effectively supplement the efforts of the State Governments in controlling crime on the Railways, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) staff are being deployed to escort many trains and also on access control

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

duties in the passenger area to augment the efforts of the State Governments, RPF has also been empowered to deal with the minor offences affecting the train operations such as alarm chain pulling, roof travel, touting, ticketless travel, unauthorized entry into coaches earmarked for ladies etc. (except Sabotage related offences under Sections 150 to 152) with the amendment to the Railway Act, 1989 w.e.f. July 2004. During the year 2006, RPF have apprehended 49 offenders responsible for looting of passengers after drugging them and forwarded to the concerned GRP for further legal action. The following preventive measures are also being taken to combat such menace:—

1. Repeated announcement is made at Railway Stations to create awareness amongst the passengers not to take any food/drinks/ tea etc. from unknown passengers.
2. Wide publicity in the local and leading newspapers as well as TV is also being given.
3. Signages in local language are being displayed in trains we well as on station platforms.
4. Pamphlets are also being distributed among the passengers to create awareness.
5. Close coordination with GRP and local police are being maintained to exchange information regarding criminals indulging in such act.
6. Photographs of habitual offenders are pasted at Stations platforms in Rogue's Gallery.

Retirement of commission vendors

381. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of commission vendors have been served with retirement orders, along with bearers;

(b) if so, what were their terms and conditions of appointment orders;